

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LA PAZ 02863 110157Z
ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 /031 W
-----076926 110204Z /73

R 101616Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 286

S E C R E T LA PAZ 2863

STADIS////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR
SUBJECT: ALLEGED STATE RESTRICTIONS OF DEA

REF: STATE 83084

1. SINCE MY ARRIVAL ON OCTOBER 14 OF LAST YEAR NEITHER THE AMBASSADOR NOR THE NARCOTICS COORDINATOR HAS VETOED ANY DEA OPERATION OR OTHERWISE RESTRAINED DEA ACTIVITIES. WE HAVE, OF COURSE, EXERCISED OUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN ASSURING THAT DEA GUIDELINES AS CONTAINED IN 75 STATE 14796 ARE FOLLOWED. WE ARE FORTUNATE IN HAVING FRANK AND EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH THE DEA AGENTS HERE AND THEY HAVE BEEN REALISTIC AND CONSCIENTIOUS IN CONDUCTING THEIR OPERATIONS.

2. I AM AWARE OF TWO INSTANCES OF RESTRAINT ON DEA OPERATIONS WHICH OCCURED PRIOR TO MY ARRIVAL.

3. THE NARCOTICS COORDINATOR IS AWARE, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT HERE AT THE TIME, THAT PRIOR TO THEN SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER'S VISIT TO BOLIVIA IN JUNE 1976, THE DEA ACTING SAIC HAD PLANNED AN OPERATION IN SANTA CRUZ, MAINLY CONCERNED WITH LOCATING COCAINE LABORATORIES AND SOURCES OF LABORATORY SUPPLIES. AMBASSADOR STEDMAN DID NOT RPT NOT VETO THIS PLAN, BUT FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS WHICH WERE ACCEPTED BY DEA, DID
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NOT APPROVE OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION AS DRAFTED. (A COPY OF THE DRAFT PLAN--OPERATION ORIENTE--IS PROBABLY AT DEA HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON). WE ARE POUCHING A MEMO STATING AMBASSADOR STEDMAN'S RESERVATIONS REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN. IT IS NOT ALTOGETHER CLEAR TO US WHY THE PLAN WAS NOT REVISED AND BROUGHT UP FOR CONSIDERATION LATER. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE US/BOLIVIAN NARCOTICS PROGRAM HERE

IN THE WAKE OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT RESULTED IN ITS BEING SET ASIDE. WE ARE NOW ENGAGED IN OPERATIONS IN THE SANTA CRUZ AREA DIRECTED AT THE IDENTIFICATION OF AND OBTAINING OF INTELLIGENCE ON MAJOR TRAFFICKERS WHICH MAY LEAD TO THEIR PROSECUTION. CHAIRMAN WOLFF MAY BE AWARE OF THE DRAFT OREIENTE PLAN AS A RESULT OF HIS TALKS WITH DEA DURING HIS AUGUST 1977 VISIT TO SANTA CRUZ.

4. AMBASSADOR STEDMAN ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS BETWEEN OCTOBER 1976 AND JUNE 1977 OPPOSED THE RETURN TO BOLIVIAN OF AN INFORMANT FEDERICO AUGUSTO ALMARAZ-VIZE WHOM DEA WANTED TO USE TO GATHER INFORMATION ON THE INFORMANT'S ALLEGATION OF INVOLVEMENT IN NARCOTICS TRADE OF A GOB MINISTER. AMBASSADOR STEDMAN'S VIEW WAS NOT THAT THE MINISTER INVOLVED SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM INVESTIGATION, BUT THAT THE PARTICULAR INFORMANT IN QUESTION WAS UNRELIABLE AND COULD NOT BE COUNTED UPON TO CARRY OUT THIS MISSION WITHOUT DAMAGE TO THE US. (SEE LA PAZ 245 OF JANUARY 11, 1977, STATE 10735 OF JANUARY 17, 1977, STATE 68280 OF MARCH 28, 1977, LA PAZ 2319 OF MARCH 30, 1977, STATE 75578 OF APRIL 5, 1977 AND LA PAZ 4699 OF JUNE 16, 1977 FOR DETAILS.) THE INFORMANT IN QUESTION HAS BEEN COOPERATING WITH DEA IN LIMA.

5. DEA LA PAZ NOW HAS NO INTEREST IN HAVING THIS INFORMANT (WHO IS CONSIDERED UNRELIABLE AND DANGEROUS HERE) RETURN TO BOLIVIA. I HAVE REVIEWED THIS CASE RECENTLY WITH THE DEA AGENT
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CONCERNED HERE AND HE TELLS ME HE DOES NOT WANT THIS INFORMANT TO RETURN TO BOLIVIA. I HAVE NO INTEREST IN PROTECTING THE GOB MINISTER, OR OTHERS, FROM INVESTIGATION OF REASONABLE EVIDENCE OF NARCOTICS INVOLVEMENT AND WOULD HAVE NO HESITATION IN SEEING THAT SUCH EVIDENCE WERE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GOB.

6. SINCE MY ARRIVAL, THE COUNTRY OFFICE HAS MADE NO UNREASONABLE PROPOSALS WHICH AS CHIEF OF MISSION I MIGHT HAVE FELT COMPELLED TO DISAPPROVE. WE HAVE ASSISTED DEA WHENEVER NEEDED IN CONTACTS WITH THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND OTHER GOB HIGH OFFICIALS. THE DCM/NARCOTICS COORDINATOR MEETS REGULARLY WITH THE DEA, DISCUSSES DEVELOPMENTS AND ASSISTS THEM IN BIWEEKLY NARCOTICS CONTROL COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND FAR MORE OFTEN IN INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS. THE EMBASSY HAS SUPPORTED DEA REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL MANPOWER. THE NARCOTICS COORDINATOR HAS ATTENDED MAY DNSP (DEA'S BOLIVIAN COUNTERPART) FUNCTIONS AND CEREMONIES WITH DEA, DEMONSTRATING DEA'S FULL BACKING BY THE EMBASSY. HE HAS ALSO ESTABLISHED A CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH DNSP CHIEF COLONEL APARICIO AND MEETS FREQUENTLY WITH HIM.

7. TO CITE ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF EMBASSY SUPPORT, DNSP IS FROM TIME TO TIME CRITICIZED BY LAW OFFICIALS FOR ALLOWING DEA TO CONVOY ARRESTED SUSPECTS TO THE US FOR INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION. AT DEA REQUEST, AND TO GIVE SUPPORT TO DNSP IN SUCH CASES, I HAVE WRITTEN LETTERS TO THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR THANKING HIM FOR THE DNSP'S COOPERATION AND INFORMING HIM OF THE OUTCOME OF SUCH INVESTIGATIONS. IN SHORT, WE REGARD DEA AS A VITAL ELEMENT IN OUR COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH AID, OTHER SECTIONS OF THE MISSION AND THE BOLIVIAN AUTHORITIES TO REDUCE TRAFFIC IN COCAINE AND WE SUPPORT DEA ACCORDINGLY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, INTERAGENCY COOPERATION, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LAPAZ02863
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780154-1089
Format: TEL
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780475/aaaacqr.tel
Line Count: 126
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d493aab3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SNM
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 78 STATE 83084
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3022694
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALLEGED STATE RESTRICTIONS OF DEA
TAGS: SNAR, BL, US, DEA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d493aab3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014